

ARTICLE XI

SIGN REGULATIONS

1101 Purpose

The purpose of this Article is to promote and protect the public health, welfare, and safety by regulating existing and proposed outdoor advertising, outdoor advertising signs, and outdoor signs of all types. It is intended to protect the physical appearance of the Village, and preserve the scenic and natural beauty of designated areas. It is further intended to reduce sign of advertising distraction and obstructions that may contribute to traffic accidents, reduce hazards that may be caused by signs overhanging or projecting over public rights-of-way, provide more open space, curb the deterioration of the natural environment, and enhance Village development.

1102 Governmental Signs Excluded

For the purpose of this ordinance "sign" does not include signs erected and maintained pursuant to or in the discharge of any governmental function, or that required by any law, or ordinance, or governmental regulation.

1103 General Requirements for all Signs and Districts

- 1103.01 The regulations contained in this section shall apply to all signs and all use districts.
- A. In no event shall an illuminated sign or lighting device be placed or directed so as to permit the beams and illumination there from to be directed or beamed upon a public thoroughfare, highway, sidewalk, or adjacent premises so as to cause glare or reflection that may constitute a traffic hazard or nuisance.
 - B. No sign shall employ any parts or elements which revolve, rotate, whirl, spin or otherwise make use of motion to attract attention. Subsections A and B of this section shall not apply to any sign performing a public service function indicating time, temperature, stock market quotations or similar service.
 - C. All wiring, fittings, and materials used in construction, and operation of electrically illuminated signs shall be in accordance with the provisions of the local electric code in effect, if any.

- D. No projecting sign shall be erected or maintained from the front or face of a building a distance of more than two (2) feet, including those projecting from the face of any theater, hotel, or motel marquee.
- E. No sign shall be placed on the roof on any building, except those signs whose supporting structure is screened so the sign appears to be a continuation of the face of the building.
- F. No portable or temporary sign shall be placed on the front or face of a building or on any premises, except as provided in Section 1115 herein.
- G. No sign or part thereof shall contain or consist of banners, posters, pennants, ribbons, streamers, spinners, or other similar moving devices. Such devices, as well as strings of lights shall not be used for the purpose of advertising or attracting attention when not part of a sign.
- H. No sign erected or maintained in the window of a building, visible from any public or private street or highway, shall occupy more than twenty (20) percent of the window surface.
- I. No sign of any classification \ shall be installed, erected or attached in any form, shape, or manner to a fire escape or any door or window giving access to any fire escape.
- J. All signs hung and erected shall be plainly marked with the name of the person, firm, or corporation responsible for maintaining the sign.
- K. Should any sign be or become unsafe or be in danger of falling, the owner thereof or the person maintaining the same, shall upon receipt of written notice from the Zoning Inspector proceed at once to put such a sign in a safe and secure condition or remove the sign.
- L. No sign shall be placed in any public right-of-way except publicly owned signs, such as traffic control signs and directional signs. Signs directing and guiding traffic and parking on private property but bearing no advertising matter shall be permitted on any property.

1103.02 Animated or Changeable Copy Signs

Definitions and Exhibits

For the purpose of Article XI of this code, the following definitions shall apply, unless the context clearly indicates or requires a different meaning.

A. Animated Sign

A sign employing motion or the illusion of motion, whose message or content changes more frequently than every 20 seconds, are differentiated from changeable copy signs as defined and regulated by this code, including the following types:

- (1) **Electronically Activated (Animated)**
Animated signs producing the illusion of movement by means of electronic, electrical or electro-mechanical input and/or illumination capable of simulating movement through employment of the characteristics of one or both of the classifications noted below:
 - (a) **Flashing**
Animated signs or animated portions of signs whose illumination is characterized by a cycle of illumination and non-illumination.
 - (b) **Patterned Illusionary Movement**
Animated signs or animated portions of signs whose illumination is characterized by simulated movement through alternate or sequential activation of various illuminated elements for the purpose of producing light patterns designed to appear in some form of motion.
- (2) **Environmentally Activated**
Animated signs or devices motivated by wind, thermal changes or other natural environmental input. This classification includes spinners, pinwheels, pennant strings, and/or other devices or displays that respond to naturally occurring external motivation.
- (3) **Mechanically Activated**
Animated signs characterized by motion and/or rotation activated by a mechanical means.

B. Changeable Copy Sign.

A sign with changeable copy, whose message or content changes not more frequently than every 20 seconds, including the following types:

(1) Electronically Activated (Changeable Copy)

A changeable copy sign whose message copy or content can be changed by means of remote electronically energized on-off switching combinations of alphabetic or pictographic components arranged on a display surface. Illumination may be integral to the components, such as characterized by lamps or other light emitting devices; or it may be from an external light source designed to reflect off the changeable component display.

(2) Manually Activated Sign.

A changeable copy sign whose message or copy or content can be changed manually.

1103.03 Prohibited Signs

The following signs shall be prohibited in all districts unless specifically authorized by the provisions stated in Article_XI:

A. Animated sign.

B. Flashing sign.

1104 Measurement of Sign Area

The surface area of a sign shall be computed as including the entire area within a regular, geometric form or combinations of regular, geometric forms comprising all of the display area of the sign and including all of the elements of the matter displayed.

1105 Signs Permitted in All Districts Not Requiring a Permit

1105.01 Signs advertising the sale, lease, or rental of the premises upon which the sign is located, shall not exceed twelve (12) square feet in area, except in all residential districts where the area of the sign shall not be more than six (6) square feet.

1105.02 Professional name plate not to exceed four_(4)_square feet in area.

1105.03 Signs denoting the name and address of the occupants of the premises, not to exceed two (2) square feet in area.

1106 Signs Permitted in Any District Requiring a Permit

- 1106.01 Signs or bulletin boards customarily incidental to places of worship, libraries, museums, social clubs, or societies, which signs or bulletin boards shall not exceed fifteen (15) square feet in area and which shall be located on the premises of such institution.
- 1106.02 Any sign advertising a commercial enterprise, including real estate developers or sub dividers, in a district zoned residential shall not exceed twelve (12) square feet in area and shall advertise only the names of the owners, trade names, products sold and/or the business or activity conducted on the premises where such sign is located.

1107 Signs Permitted in the Agricultural, Flood Plain, Office Residential and Residential Districts

- 1107.01 Only those signs described in Sections 1105 and 1106 shall be permitted within these districts.

1108 Signs Permitted in Commercial Districts (OS, NB, HS, CBD, and PC

- 1108.01 Each business permitted within the above listed commercial districts shall be permitted flat or wall on-premises signs. Projection of wall signs shall not exceed two feet measured from the face of the main building. The area of all permanent on-premises signs for any single business enterprise may have an area equivalent to one square foot of sign area for each lineal foot of building width, or part of a building occupied by such enterprise but shall not exceed one hundred (100) square feet
- 1108.02 Service Stations, drive-in type uses, as well as any use within the HS District shall be permitted, in addition to the above permitted signs, on free standing on-premise sign advertising the establishment, provided such sign shall not have an area of more than fifty (50) square feet per face. Only one such sign shall be permitted per street upon which the establishment fronts. No such sign shall be located in any required front, side, or rear yard space and in any case shall be located not closer than ten (10) feet to any street right-of-way. The sign shall not be over thirty (30) feet in height.
- 1108.03 Within the PC District, in addition to those signs permitted under provision .01, an additional sign to identify the shopping center may be permitted. Such sign shall not exceed fifteen (15) square feet per face and shall not be over thirty (30) feet in height.

1108.04 Changeable Copy signs permitted in these districts are limited to one single face sign flush mounted to the exterior of the building or displayed through the window. Changeable copy signs in these districts are limited to fifteen (15) square feet of display per face and shall not exceed sixteen (16) feet in height above ground level.

1109 Signs Permitted in Industrial Districts I-1 and P1 Zones

1109.01 Within the I-1 and PI Districts, all signs shall be permitted as regulated within Section 1108.01 and .02. However, as an alternative to sign area based upon building frontage, such sign area may also be based upon the following: One half square foot for each lineal foot of lot frontage, whichever results in the larger sign area.

1109.02 Within the PI District, in addition to those signs permitted under provision .01, an additional sign to identify the industrial development may be permitted. Such sign shall not exceed fifteen (15) square feet per face and shall not be over thirty (30) feet in height.

1109.03 Changeable Copy signs permitted in this district are limited to one sign with 2 faces with twenty (20) square feet of display area per face. Overall height of a changeable copy shall not exceed ten (10) feet above ground level in these districts.

1110 Sign Setback Requirements

Except as modified in Sections 1111-1114; On premises signs where permitted shall be set back from the established right-of-way line of any thoroughfare at least ten (10) feet. No off-premises sign shall be erected in front of the required setback line for the appropriate zoning district.

1111 Increased Setback

For every square foot by which any on-premises sign exceeds fifty (50) square feet, the setback is increased by one half (1/2) foot but the setback need not exceed one hundred (100) feet.

1112 Setbacks for Off-Premises Signs

If a setback line is not established for the appropriate zoning district, off-premises signs shall be set back a minimum of twenty (20) feet from the right-of-way line. In addition, regulation of signs along interstate and primary highways shall conform to the requirements Ohio revised Code Chapter 5-16 and the regulation adopted pursuant thereto.

1113 Setbacks for Public and Ouasi Public Signs

Real estate signs and bulletin boards for a church, school or any other public, religious or educational institution may be erected not less than ten (10) feet from the established right-of-way line of any street or highway provided such sign or bulletin board does not obstruct traffic visibility at street or highway intersections. This section does not allow signs prohibited in section 1103.03.

1114 Special Yard Provisions

On premises signs where permitted shall be erected or placed in conformity with the side and rear yard requirements of the district in which located, except that in any residential district, on-premises signs shall not be erected or placed twelve (12) feet of a side or rear lot line. If the requirements for a single side yard in the appropriate zoning district is more than twelve (12) feet, the latter shall apply.

1115 Temporary Signs

Temporary signs not exceeding fifty (50) square feet in area, announcing special public or institutional events, the erection of a building, the architect, the builders, or contractors may be erected for a period of sixty (60) days plus the construction period. Such temporary signs shall conform to the general requirements listed in Section 1103, the setback requirements in Sections 1110- 1113 and, in addition, such other standards deemed necessary to accomplish the intent of the Article as stated in Section 1101.

1116 Wall Signs Pertaining to Nonconforming Uses

On premises wall signs pertaining to a nonconforming use shall be permitted on the same premises of such use shall be permitted, provided the area of such sign does not exceed twelve (12) square feet.

1117 Political Signs

No political sign shall be posted in any place or in any manner that is destructive to public property upon posting or removal. No political sign shall be posted in a public right- of-way nor shall any such sign be posted on a utility pole. No political sign shall be posted more than sixty (60) days before an election. All candidates for public office, their campaign committees, or other persons, responsible for the posting on public property of campaign material shall remove such material within two weeks following election day.

1118 Corporation Limit Signs

Signs established by the Village of Covington designating its boundaries and providing information which may be useful to persons traveling into the community. Corporation limit signs may include the signs of non-profit churches, civic organizations and the like, provided such signs are established in accord with regulations established by the Covington Village Council.

1119 Supplementary Regulations

- 1119.01 No sign shall be erected closer than fifty (50) feet to any intersection, with exception of those signs incidental to the legal process and necessary to the public welfare or those business signs attached to a building or structure.
- 1119.02 All signs and billboards erected within two hundred (200) feet of any intersection must be erected so as not to obstruct traffic sight lines at street intersection or railroad grade crossings.
- 1119.03 Service station and restaurant signs located within 660 feet of a freeway and orientated to traffic utilizing such freeway, shall be permitted a maximum height of 50 feet as measured from the center line elevation of the freeway to which they are orientated and subject to sign area restrictions as specified under Fee Standing Sign provisions.

1120 Sign Permit Application and Fees

No sign regulated by this ordinance may be erected, painted, installed, or otherwise established in the Village of Covington without a permit, therefore, which permit shall be obtained through the office of the Zoning Officer. All sign permits with the exception of political advertising permits, shall bear a fee set forth in section 613 of the zoning code. No fee shall be charged for a political advertising permit. No permit shall be required for real estate signs of ten (10) square feet or less, or for domestic advertising signs.

1121 Enforcement Responsibility

Enforcement of this ordinance shall be the responsibility of the Zoning Officer, Village Administrator, and such other appropriate personnel as may be designated by the Village Mayor.

1122 Removal of Unlawful Signs

Any sign which violates the provisions of this ordinance is a public and private nuisance, and the building and zoning inspector shall give ten (10) days notice by personal service or by registered or certified mail, to the owner or lessee of the land on which such sign is located, to remove such sign.

If any such sign has not been removed on or before expiration of 10 days following the receipt of the said notice by the owner or lessee of the land upon which the sign is located, the zoning officer or any of his duly authorized agents may enter upon the premises and remove, obliterate or abate the sign. The cost of such removal, obliteration or abatement shall be then certified to the Village Solicitor for collection by civil action against the owner and/or lessee of the land upon which the sign is located.

Notice to the owner or lessee shall not be required prior to the removal of *an* unlawful sign which, in the opinion of the zoning officer, creates an immediate or potential danger to persons or property due to structural deficiencies or inadequate maintenance; nor shall notice be required of the building and zoning inspector, creates an immediate or potential danger to persons or property because of its location.